

HAZARDOUS WASTE SITE DOSSIER--L.E. CARPENTER COMPANY

Bill Friedman's
Review of DEP's
file
~ 8/17/79

I. Site Name

L.E. Carpenter Company, 170 North Main Street, Wharton, New Jersey.

II. Background to Investigation and Sources of Initial Referral

This site has been referred to the EPA by the New Jersey DEP.

III. Site Description

mfy vinyl wallpaper

The L.E. Carpenter Company is a vinyl manufacturer. Its plant is on the site of a former dye mill, where wastes may have been dumped over 20 years ago.

Conditions at the Carpenter site were described by the New Jersey DEP as "deplorable." The site contains, for instance, many buried and broken drums, a contaminated seepage pool and several open trenches.

One prior recorded pollution incident connected with this site was a chemical spill (of PVC and solvents) on January 29, 1975. This spill resulted in a fish kill in the nearby Rockaway River.

An aquifer is located below and downstream of the Carpenter property.

IV. Allegations of "Imminent Hazard" Pollution

Tests by the DEP have revealed contamination of the ground water below the Carpenter property. Among the identified contaminants are Xylene, phthalates, and oil and grease. The site has also been implicated in the Xylene contamination of Municipal Well No. 3 in the Borough of Wharton, which has been closed. It is felt that there is a threat of further contamination of Wharton's underground water system. The Rockaway River, which feeds several large-capacity wells downstream, is also threatened with contamination. (?)

V. Current Involvement

The New Jersey DEP has been conducting testing at the Carpenter property and has been engaged in negotiations with the company. Test borings to a depth of 12 feet have shown contamination of ground water by toxics including Xylene. The negotiations with Carpenter have led the company to assert that it will "spend whatever is necessary to get rid of the stuff."

DEP is presently actively negotiating with Carpenter on the corrective measures to be taken.

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However, although Carpenter originally stated that it would install monitoring wells at its own expense, it has now retreated from that position. No enforcement action has been taken against Carpenter at this point.